vanized wire sieves distributed between the coils of steam pipes. Air for drying is admitted at the bottom of this shaft along the floor by slide doors. And to carry off the moist air I now use natural draught, by a wooden stack, 4 feet square and 20 feet high; at one-third of the distance from each end of the shaft, two more moist air draughts, each 4 feet square, connect with the 20 foot high stack from the top of the center of the shaftor evaporator. When I run this evaporator up to its full capacity, it puffs up and sweats the fruit with only 150° of heat. If I should put an exhaust fan in the center of the moist air stack, would it stop this sweating and cooking process of the fruit that I am now troubled with? If it would, what kind and size of fan would it require to give the best results for this sized evaporator? A. It appears from your description that the ventilation of the evaporator is not equally distributed, or is weak at the ends. This should be tested by thermometers at points out of the direct current of air through the evaporator, to ascertain inequality of temperature, and if found, should be regulated by increasing the number of vents and lessening the size. The wire sieves should not be too close to the steam pipes, as the strong radiant heat would cook the fruit, when a thermometer hung up in the moving air would only indicate 150°. If you had only one row of steam pipe with the fruit above it, or in other words, spread the plant over a larger area with less height, the cumulative heat of air circulating through 5 rows of coils would be avoided. We apprehend (although you failed to state it) that the trouble is on the upper shelves at points of least circulation. A common fan blower of 2 feet diameter, blowing the air into a chamber under and along the bottom of the evaporator, with perforations to equally distribute the air, might prevent cooking in the hot parts, but would make the lower tier too cool for effective service. The most effective driers for fruit have all the heat below, so that air of the same temperature pervades the whole chamber. This arrangement is largely used in New York and other places for drying fruit.

(549) H. L. asks: 1. Would it cost any more to run the dynamo after it was set up and ready to run than it would cost to run oil lamps for the same amount of light? A. Oil lamps are more economical than incandescent electric lights. 2. In what SUPPLEMENT can I find it described in full? A. SUPPLEMENT, No. 600. 3. How are the magnet arms secured to the base and top, and of what kind of iron are all the castings made? A. This information is given in the SUPPLEMENT referred to. 4. What do you mean by the polar extremities? A. The extremities in which the magnetic poles are developed. 5. Would not copper bars do instead of the bronze bars of the commutator? A. Yes. 6. Where can I get copper or bronze? A. Consult our advertising columns. 7. Can I melt copper or bronze in a blacksmith's forge, and in what? A. You can melt it in a Hessian crucible. Heat the crucible and its contents gradually at first. 8. How can I mould the metal for the commutator cylinder. A. Use ordinary moulding sand. 9. Would it not do as well to solder the ends of the armature wire to the commutator cylinder as to screw them? A. Solder is apt to fail in such a place. 10. With what size wire shall I wrap the armature and magnet of a twelve-light machine, made on the same principle as the eight-light machine? A. Wrap the armature with No. 18 wire. Apply four extra layers of wire to the magnet, and increase the speed.

(550) A. V. asks: Would you be so kind as to let me know how many layers and how many turns in each layer of No. 10 copper wire will bring a magnet to its maximum point, the core of which is soft iron, being 1½ inches in diameter, 10 inches long, being in circuit with 250 16-candle power lamps connected in multiple arc, from a dynamo having 72 volts? A. We presume that your lamps are 70 volt; if so, their resistance is very slight, and you cannot afford to introduce more than a fraction of such resistance in series with them. Thus No. 4 wire would introduce a resistance of about one-tenth ohm, or nearly one-third that of your lamps, reducing their illuminating power seriously. Your proper method is to use heavy wire, and if necessary increase the size of the core, and as a last resource use lamps of lower voltage.

(551) O. T. H. writes: 1. In the SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN SUPPLEMENT, April 14, 1888, No. 641, page 10240, on the 31st line, about how to make a simple electric motor, it reads: "The size of the iron wire of the core is No. 18 American wire gauge," and on the next page, the 7th line from the last, it reads: "Size of wire on armature, Am. W. G. No. 16." Please tell me which one is right? A. Both. No. 18 iron wire is right for the core, and No. 16 is right for the coils of the conductor wound upon the core. 2. What is meant by a disk of vulcanized fiber? A. Vulcanized fiber is an insulating material used largely in electrical work. 3. How much will it cost to run the simple electric motor for eight hours? A. Seventy-five or eighty cents. 4. Which is the easiest way to make a cell of plunging bichromate battery, having one zinc plate 5×7 inches and two carbon plates of the same size? A. Place the zinc plate between two paraffined quarter inch bars of wood. Place the carbon plates outside of the strips, and clamp the carbon plates and the zinc plates together by means of a pair of paraffined bars of wood three-quarters of an inch thick, and extending beyond the edges of the plate.

(552) F. G. W., Denver, writes: On Sunday, February 3, there were three groups of spots on the sun in the form of a triangle. These groups seemed to be composed of minute spots. On Monday afternoon, February 4, we had a violent dust and wind storm. It continued through the night. On Tuesday afternoon, February 5, I observed the sun. The spots had disappeared. With my strongest eye piece, giving a power of 100, I could not detect a trace of the spots. I am almost certain that there was some connection between the storm and the spots. Would a solar cyclone, or something like it, produce such a storm? A. The past season has been a period of minimum sun spots, and any sudden outburst of spots upon the sun at such periods indicates abnormal conditions of activity at the solar surface, which at times heretofore have caused coincident magnetic storms upon the earth. These magnetic storms have been followed by wind storms. It seems to be pretty well established that there is an almost instantaneous coincidence of magnetic effect upon the earth derived from solar disturbance. This may also resolve itself into its electrical equivalent and become observant in corresponding meteorological phenomena.

(553) R. A. W., "Adams Co."—In the SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN SUPPLEMENT, No. 182, and in others you will find many forms of electro-magnets described. In general terms the larger you make the magnet, the greater will be the power. You might try a one inch bar of iron, two feet long, bent into U shape, and wound with 1,000 feet of No. 15 wire. This with from five to fifteen cells of Fuller battery would give an excellent effect.

(554) G. E. T.—White military belts can be made to look as good as new by the following: Dissolve 1 ounce white tallow soap in ¾ pint of warm water and mix well therewith white of one egg and 3 ounces fine Paris white. Wipe in and rub down with a rag. White Castile soap may be used where the white tallow soap cannot be had.

(555) R. S. asks: 1. What size should I make the iron wire armature core of simple motor, March 17, 1887, if the whole armature was to be 5 inches diameter? What size iron wire would I have to use for the core, and how many layers of it would I have to wind? A. Use 12 layers of No. 18 wire. Make the core 3 inches wide. 2. What size wire would I have to use on armature, and how many layers on armature? A. Wind the core with No. 16 wire disposed in 20 coils of six layers each.

(556) J. S. S. writes: 1. I can get almost unlimited gravity battery power (nearly 300 cells), and would like to run a simple electric motor as described by you. How can I do it by this battery? A. If you wish to use all the cells, place 16 in series and as many as you wish in parallel, the more the better. A. Gravity battery, owing to its high resistance, is ill adapted to this work. 2. In the storage battery does the current decompose the water? A. Not unless the current is continued after the battery is fully charged. 3. (*a*) What is the amount of the dangerous alternating current? (*b*) Of the continuous? A. (*a*) 600 to 700 volts. (*b*) About the same.

(557) W. A. R. asks: Can you change the center of gravity of a dish by filling it with water, or in other words, can you make a hollow vessel or dish of such a shape that it will tip over by filling it with water? A. To a pipe inclined at an angle of 45° attach a small base of sufficient weight to support the pipe while empty. Such a vessel when filled with water will tip over.

(558) C. E. B. asks: 1. If five Leclanche cells were to be set up in one common solution without the glass jars, would such a battery be equal in power to one of the usual form of separate jars? A. No; its power will be scarcely more than that of a single cell. 2. How many electric light carbons six inches long should I use to each zinc in a sal-ammoniac battery to get the best results? A. 9 or 10. 3. For electric gas lighting should the zincs and carbons be connected one to the other, or should they be connected separately? A. For a single lamp the zinc of one cell should be connected with the carbon of the next, and so on. For a number of lamps the elements would have to be connected according to the voltage of the lamps. 4. Would such a battery as described above or a Leclanche battery work with a solution of salt (chloride of sodium)? A. You can get a current from a Leclanche battery charged with a solution of common salt, but it is not equal to sal-ammoniac, and it evolves chlorine, which is disagreeable. A Leclanche battery is very quickly polarized in active service, and takes time to recover.

(559) H. D. H. asks: Have ice boats been known ever to make 100 miles an hour, and about what rate of wind would be necessary for that speed under the most favorable circumstances? A. We have no record of so high a speed as 100 miles per hour for an ice boat. A 60 mile gale might produce the speed if the boat could preserve its leeway, or hold up to the wind, which is very doubtful. Probably from 50 to 60 is the highest speed ever attained. See SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN SUPPLEMENT, Nos. 54, 61, 214, and 220, for sailing faster than the wind.

(560) W. F. P. writes: 1. I find the battery described in the SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN for December 17, 1887, soon becomes polarized. Will you kindly inform me through your Notes and Queries how I may remedy this? Is it necessary to amalgamate the zincs often? A. All single-fluid bichromate batteries are unsatisfactory as regards constancy of current. You cannot remedy it. 2. Is there any hand dynamo described in your paper that may be constructed without castings? Is the simple electric motor suited for this purpose? A. The trouble with a dynamo having soft iron laminated magnet cores, such as used in the motor named, is that it is hard to start the current for want of residual magnetism. We advise you to adhere to cast iron cores for small machines.

(561) A. A. writes: With regard to the simple electric motor in the SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN SUPPLEMENT, No. 641, of April 4, 1888, page 10240, will you be kind enough to inform me if a field magnet with the body made of cast iron would be as efficient as one made of strips of Russia iron, such as described in the article? A. The difference is slightly in favor of the Russia iron or wrought iron magnet, but if you use very soft gray cast iron, the difference will not be perceptible.

(562) Motor.—Any device which will keep the bars of the commutator smooth and clean would be worthy of a patent, and could be patented if new.

(563) A. P. asks for the value of coal gas for cooking purposes. Is it to be preferred to coal, and is it more economical than coal? Could you give me the address of a good maker of gas stoves? A. Coal gas for cooking saves the annoyance of ashes and dust, and if properly used, is in many cases not more expensive than coal, as it can be extinguished as soon as the cooking is over. For gas stoves apply to your gas company, or consult our advertising columns.

(564) W. J. H. asks: 1. Will the dynamo described in SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN SUPPLEMENT, No. 600, run lights enough to light a room 20×40×12? A. The dynamo will run eight to twelve 16 candle power lamps—hardly enough for room you mention. 2. What kind of lamps are the best to use with it? A. Use Edison or other incandescent lamp, 60 volt, arranged in parallel. 3. How much power does it require to run the dynamo, and what would be the running expense of the lamp per hour, when run from 4 to 6 hours a day? A. About one horse power. A lamp will last about 400 hours. From these data you can make your own calculations, based on expense of fuel, etc., in your locality.

(565) A. H. asks: 1. What is paraffine wax made from? A. It is made largely from distillation of coal at low temperatures. Ozocerite, a natural mineral, is also an extensive source. 2. At what temperature does it run best (to mould)? A. Different samples melt at different temperatures; such as requires 112° Fah. or more is adapted for casting. When well fused, you can pour it into the moulds. 3. Is oil proper to use? A. No. Generally you will require nothing on the mould. 4. How do you cleanse it? A. Melt it and keep in fusion until impurities either settle or rise to the top, when they can be removed. You can wash it with hot water or filter while hot through flannel. Chemical treatment involves heating with strong acids or alkali, according to the nature of the impurities, followed by washing.

(566) H. S. C.—For description and tests of the modern great guns see SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN SUPPLEMENT, Nos. 230, 256, 450, 510, 583, 600, 617, 615. For the great battles of the world, see Fisher's "Outlines of Universal History," which we can mail for $3.50. We know of no successful attempts at aerial navigation without balloons.

(567) F. V. B. asks how to temper drills to drill surface rocks and bowlders, some of the hardest granite, others more like flint, and what steel is best to make the drills of? A. Use what is called "drill steel" in the hardware trade. Make the cutting edge rather thick, and do not draw the temper. Any blacksmith can forge and harden such drills at the lowest heat without drawing the temper.

(568) H. W. G.—Belts that slip from overwork are benefited by lagging the pulleys. It is true that two cylinder engines at right angles have no dead center without a balance wheel.

Enquiries to be Answered.

The following enquiries have been sent in by some of our subscribers, and doubtless others of our readers will take pleasure in answering them. The *number* of the enquiry should head the reply.

(569) C. P. T. writes: The months of January and March of this year have each two new moons on the first and thirty-first days, while February has none. Can you tell me how long it will be until another such event occurs?

Replies to Enquiries.

The following replies relate to enquiries recently published in SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN, and to the numbers therein given:

(404) H. R.—Water Power, etc.—For estimating the value of a water power, multiply the water flowing in the stream in cubic feet per minute by 62·4 (the weight per cubic foot) and by the fall in feet. Divide this product by 33,000 for the horse power. See SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN SUPPLEMENT, No. 616, on water power. 2. Set posts butt down. 3. Bark on, wet or dry as convenient. 4. Charred posts last 50 per cent longer than uncharred. 5. Winter is the best time to cut posts.

(405) C. A. A.—Roofs.—Water from a galvanized iron roof is not safe. The roof should be painted with iron oxide paint. Galvanized iron pipe is largely used for conveying water, and is considered safe if water is allowed to run constantly. Tin makes the best roof, all things considered. Water is safe to drink from a roof painted with oxide of iron paint.

☞ Books or other publications referred to above can, in most cases, be promptly obtained through the SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN office, Munn & Co., 361 Broadway, New York.

INDEX OF INVENTIONS

For which Letters Patent of the United States were Granted

March 12, 1889,

AND EACH BEARING THAT DATE.

[See note at end of list about copies of these patents.]

Acid, alizarine-blue sulpho, R. Bohn 399,480
Acid, alizarine-blue sulphuric, R. Bohn 399,481
Aerial railway or wire tramway and appliance therefor, J. Prittie 399,283
Air brake, J. S. Lapish 399,420
Alarm for doors, etc., N. J. Busby 399,242
Album, O. J. Griffiths 399,324, 399,325
Alizarine indigo blue, R. Bohn 399,482
Alizarine green, R. Bohn 399,479
Amalgamator, centrifugal, W. White 399,590
Armature, dynamo, J. A. Hayes 399,328
Atomizer, R. S. Knode 399,539
Auger bit, F. T. Wyckoff 399,595
Axle box, car, W. S. G. Baker 399,467
Axle lubricator, car, T. B. Bishop 399,369
Axle lubricator, car, G. W. Parker 399,627
Axles, toughening steel, J. Coffin 399,380
Bag holder, Bradshaw & Meek 399,373
Baling press, E. Beadle 399,472
Baling press, power, W. W. Seely 399,568
Balling machine, twine, I. P. Miner 399,339
Balloon, C. A. Kunzel 399,271
Barrel head, J. A. Campbell 399,494
Battery. See Secondary battery.
Bearing, roller, R. W. Hent 399,615
Bed, cot, E. J. Foster 399,254
Bed pan, rubber, A. C. Eggers 399,508
Bed, spring, D. H. Gail 399,257
Beehive, H. Penoyer 399,281
Belt fastener, E. L. Budlong 399,489
Belt shifting mechanism, J. J. Daley 399,501
Bicycle, A. G. Rose 399,285
Bicycle, G. T. Warwick 399,454
Bicycle, safety, G. T. Warwick 399,455
Bit. See Auger bit.
Blast apparatus for blast furnaces, J. M. Hartman 399,262
Board. See Bookbinder's press board. Switch board.
Boat. See Torpedo and gunboat.
Bobbin, J. H. Wells 399,589
Boiler. See Range boiler. Steam boiler. Wash boiler.
Boiler, G. F. Spencer 399,443
Boiler feeder, F. E. & M. E. Vaughn 399,586
Book, G. D. Barnard 399,469
Bookbinder's press board, J. H. Shaw 399,573
Bookcase, folding, P. Kaffenberger 399,415
Book mark, indexing, J. Lane 399,417
Book or album, N. J. Dobbins 399,249
Book stapling machine, C. E. Preusse 399,555
Books, leaf holder for, J. Hyland 399,411
Bottle cleaning machine, B. Binnington 399,477
Bottle stopper, J. J. Sands 399,440
Bottle washer, G. S. Slocum 399,576
Box. See Axle box.
Braiding machine, W. Mundt 399,623
Brake. See Air brake. Car brake. Sled brake. Vehicle brake. Wagon brake.
Brake, J. Fulton 399,515
Brick drying apparatus, G. B. Merrill 399,276
Bridge, swing, M. A. Redding 399,347
Burner. See Gas burner. Oil burner.
Butter fat from milk, extracting, C. A. Johansson 399,615
Button strip for garments, H. W. Lyon 399,338
Calcining rock, G. E. Carleton 399,490
Calcining stone, etc., kiln for, G. E. Carleton 399,495
Camera adjuster, H. E. Poehlman 399,345
Can opener, J. H. Fisher 399,252
Car brake, H. W. Howell, Jr 399,408
Car coupling, G. W. Decker 399,316
Car coupling, A. Heron 399,532
Car coupling, F. Johnson 399,333
Car coupling, D. C. McCoy 399,278
Car heater, Ruprecht & Bates 399,633
Car motor, railway, E. E. Sentman 399,572
Car, stock, J. F. Elder 399,605
Car, stock, W. H. H. Sisum 399,574
Cars, system of and apparatus for heating, R. J. Wilson 399,592
Carding engine flats, apparatus for controlling the grinding of, J. M. Hetherington 399,533
Carriage, baby, W. H. & H. N. Dunn 399,389
Carriages, fan attachment for baby, Van Nouhuys & Downes 399,585
Carrier. See Trace carrier.
Case. See Book case. Lock case. Jewelry case. Watch case.
Cash carrier apparatus, C. W. McCormick 399,428
Cash carrier apparatus, N Weeks, Jr 399,457
Chair. See Rocking chair.
Chimney cap and protector, W. W. Wright 399,594
Chimney cap or ventilator, E. P. Ryder 399,566
Clasp. See Shoe clasp.
Cleaner. See Gun cleaner. Railway track cleaner. Sink cleaner.
Clutch, friction, D. T. Denton 399,385
Coal, machine for cutting, T. Bower *et al* 399,485
Coat and vest, combined, S. E. Reinhard 399,436
Cock, pressure regulating stop, E. Rueff 399,565
Coffee pot, E. T. Newlin 399,431
Coin-operated device, automatic, B. S. Molyneux 399,643
Coke oven, M. Sandford 399,634
Coking furnace, G. A. Clark 399,378, 399,379
Compound cabinet engine, E. W. Hemlin 399,524
Condenser for charcoal kilns, J. Fredrich 399,255
Confessional, folding, J. J. Dunn 399,388
Copy holder and register, J. C. A. Dean 399,503
Copying press, letter, C. A. Thompson 399,583
Corking and wiring corks to bottles, Wile & La Casse 399,303
Cotton presses, tramper attachment for, A. Schkade 399,441
Coupling. See Car coupling. Electric circuit coupling. Pipe coupling. Wire coupling.
Crusher. See Ore crusher.
Cultivator, J. A. Pearce 399,628
Cultivator, A. C. & J. D. Tower 399,296
Cultivator, hand, K. Voigt 399,300
Curtain roller, A. Sweetland 399,448
Cutter. See Weed cutter.
Dental disk holder, H. H. Sisson 399,350
Dentist's lathe, N. W. Holt 399,406
Desk, school, W. Lippincott 399,272
Die. See Heel cutting die. Screw cutting die.
Digger. See Potato digger.
Dish washer, W. D. Miller 399,426
Drainage trap, J. Shaw, Sr 399,442
Drawer, furniture, D. C. Clapp 399,598
Dredging machine, J. Edwards 399,251
Dress form, inflatable, A. M. Gelwicks 399,322
Dress shields, apparatus for manufacturing seamless, F. W. Smith, Jr 399,637
Drill. See Seed drill.
Drums, snare strainer for, E. E. Fry 399,396
Dye, making a brown, J. Strasburger 399,581
Dynamo machine, G. L. Du Laney 399,320
Egg poacher, W. H. Littleton 399,422
Electric circuit, J. J. Carty 399,377
Electric circuit coupling, A. C. Griggs 399,326
Electric circuit protector, W. B. Harvey 399,400
Electric generators and motors, Prevention of sparking in, D. Higham 399,402
Electric machine, dynamo, D. Higham 399,403, 399,404
Electric machines and electric motors, commutator for dynamo, B. Heywood 399,329
Electric machines and electric motors, prevention of sparking in dynamo, D. Higham 399,401
Electric meter, E. F. H. H Lauckert 399,336
Electric motor, A. H. Eddy 399,507
Electric switch, H. T. Paiste 399,550
Electric wire conduit, underground, Penney & Little 399,343
Electrical distribution and conversion, system of, T. H. Hicks 399,534
Electrical distribution, system of, G. Westinghouse, Jr 399,639

Electrical machinery regulator, G. H. Condict.... 399,599
Electrode, secondary battery, A. V. Meserole..... 399,274
Elevators, electrical appliance for stopping and starting, McFeely & Potter..... 399,341
End gate, I. Cruzan..... 393,246
Engine. See Compound cabinet engine. Hydrocarbon engine. Petroleum engine. Steam engine. Vibrating engine.
Evaporating apparatus, M. Ams..... 399,311
Exercising apparatus. R. Reach..... 399,632
Eyeglass polisher, E. E. Thorpe..... 399,450
Fabric. See Fringe fabric.
Feed trough, A. C. Getten..... 399,258
Fence, H. Ihnen..... 399,617
Fence, constructing wire, W. M. Hyde..... 399,267
Fence machine, G. W. Johnson..... 399,412
Fences, tension device for use in making, G. D. Coiner..... 399,383
Fertilizer distributer. C. Greaves..... 399,399
Filter, H. Haefner..... 399,260
Firearm, magazine, Aughenbaugh & Ruffley..... 399,464
Fire extinguisher, automatic, F. & R. W. Grinnell..... 399,519
Fire extinguisher, automatic, F. Grinnell, 399,520 to 399,523
Fire kindler, E. Zonker..... 399,463
Fires in railway car stoves. apparatus for extinguishing the, Gilmour & Kellogg..... 399,398
Fishing fly book. T. H. Chubb..... 399,597
Fishing rods, line guide for, C. H. Washburn..... 399,588
Flour, screen for bolting, O. P. Hurford..... 399,616
Fringe fabric, W. W. Jacobs..... 399,332
Fruit assorter, F. N. Ellithorpe..... 399,509
Furnace. See Coking furnace.
Furnace and grate therefor, I. D. Smead..... 399,294
Furnace filling barrow. T. Failer..... 399,393
Gas and electric light fixture, combined, J. C. Cassidy..... 399,437
Gas, apparatus for separating liquids from natural, W. Moore..... 399,427
Gas burner, regenerative, F. Siemens..... 399,290
Gas lighter, electric, E. Kronenberg..... 399,416
Gate. See End gate. Railway gate.
Gate, S. W. Keasling..... 399,619
Generator. See Steam generator.
Glass. See Opera or marine glass.
Gold and silver and other ores. sponge for reducing. A. T. Hay..... 399,527
Gold, silver, etc., reducing, A. T. Hay..... 399,528
Grain binder, G. G. Hunt..... 399,536
Grinding mill, J. Good..... 399,518
Gun cleaner, C. Tomlinson..... 399,452
Guns, reflector for inspecting, A. H. Russell..... 399,286
Hand rest, E. S. Hull..... 399,266
Handle. See Tool handle.
Hanger. See Wearing apparel hanger.
Harness hook, E. Elliott..... 399,392
Harrow, S. B. Hendricks..... 399,614
Harrow, O. Rorem..... 399,564
Hasp lock, W. Tiffany..... 393,451
Hat forming machine, S. C. Palmer..... 399,551
Hatchway, J. Roach..... 399,563
Heat absorbing plate for cooling coils, A. Campbell..... 399,493
Heater. See Car heater.
Heel cutting die, C. W. Glidden..... 399,608
Heel nailing machine, J. H. Pope..... 399,631
Heel trimming tool. O. L. Noble..... 399,625
Heels, manufacturing, C. W. Glidden..... 399,607
Hinge, C. F. Sullivan..... 399,582
Holder. See Bag holder. Copy holder. Dental disk holder. Opera glass holder. Tag holder. Twine holder.
Hook. See Harness hook.
Horse detacher. G. T. Parker..... 399,434
Horse power, C. V. Birk..... 399,478
Horse powers, driving device for, W. H. Osburn.. 399,280
Hose machine, J. Murphy..... 399,547
Hotel register, A. D. Mackey..... 399,622
Hub, vehicle, M. B. Sutherland..... 399,577
Hydrulic press for covering electrical conductors with soft metal, W. Siemens..... 399,291
Hydrocarbon engine, G. M. Richards..... 399,348
Indexes, machine for cutting, E. P. Donnell..... 399,250
Induction coil, coin-operated, Williams & Roovers..... 399,591
Iron. See Soldering iron.
Iron. manufacture of, A. T. T. Hay..... 399,611
Irrigating hills for plants, machine for, H. F. Olsen..... 399,279
Jack. See See Lifting jack.
Jewelry case, C. F. Domann..... 399,603
Key noses, safety cover for, G. P. Schmidt..... 399,570
Kitchen cabinet, C. B. Rogers..... 399,438
Knob, sheet metal. J. Berbecker..... 399,476
Laces, appliance for hanging and exhibiting boot or shoe, J. Paton..... 399,552
Ladders, folding crank for extensible. P. S. Bradford..... 399,313
Lamp, gas, F. Siemens..... 399,289
Lantern, magic. H. J. Brower..... 399,596
Latch, O. A. Jenison..... 399,268
Latch, P. L. Maltbie..... 399,423
Lifting jack, J. Barrett..... 399,470
Light. See Vault light.
Lightning arrester, C. H. Wilson..... 399,305
Lobsters, pound for, J. R. Burns..... 399,241
Lock. See Hasp lock. Seal lock.
Lock case, C. M. Burgess..... 399,240
Lock case, sheet metal, C. M. Burgess..... 399,239
Loom temples. roll for, B. D. Stevens..... 399,445
Looms for weaving fabrics having end borders, shuttle box pattern mechanism for, F. Hebden..... 399,613
Looms. knife sharpener for double pile fabric, R. Simon..... 399,293
Lubricator. See Axle lubricator.
Magnetic separator. J. A. Burden..... 399,375
Marker, furrower. and coverer, E. Wyckoff..... 399,309
Mashing potatoes, etc., machine for, C. Warren... 399,587
Mast arm, C. M. Keller..... 399,334
Mat. See Wire mat.
Measuring and controlling apparatus, electrical, W. Siemens..... 399,292
Meat roaster, E. B. Rich..... 399,561
Metal skeletons for composite structures, mechanism for making coils for, J. Bordenave..... 399,484
Meter. See Electric meter.
Mill. See Grinding mill.
Mixing liquid and powdered substances, apparatus for, B. D. Milliken..... 399,276
Motion, means for converting, E. Burke..... 399,432
Motor. See Car motor.
Mortising machine, F. V. Phillips..... 399,435
Mowing machine attachment, W. S. Fox (r)..... 10,940
Nail machine, E. P. Hurd..... 399,410
Oil burner, C. Gilbert..... 399,517
Opera glass holder, W. Mack..... 399,543
Opera or marine glass, W. Mack..... 399,542
Ore crusher, J. D. Coplen..... 399,600
Oven, domestic or portable. M. S. Sager..... 399,567
Oven for vapor stoves, Voltz & Schultz..... 399,301
Pan. See Bed pan. Scale pan.
Panel fastener, E. Harroun..... 399,261
Paneling and striping implement, A. J. Avery.... 399,233
Paper and other material, apparatus for coating. T. Manahan..... 399,544
Peach stoner, C. L. Ferriott..... 399,513
Pen, fountain, P. E. Wirt..... 399,306
Petroleum engine, M. V. Schiltz..... 399,569
Phonograms, duplicating, G. H. Herrington, 399,264, 399,265
Photographic lens, A. G. Clark..... 399,499
Picture exhibitor, automatic, C. E. Patterson..... 399,553
Pipe coupling, W. H. H. Sisum..... 399,351
Pipes, gas check for water. H. B. Eareckson..... 399,390
Planes. gauge attachment for, G. H. Russell..... 399,287
Planter and fertilizer distributer, seed, C. R. Reid 399,559
Planter, cotton. J. J. Long..... 399,273
Plow, sulky, J. H. Zinn..... 399,462
Plumbers' traps, manufacture of, R. Clarke..... 399,243
Pocketbook, B. A. Capehart..... 399,376
Polishing cylinder, J. L. Perry..... 399,629
Post hole boring machine, H. H. Diggs..... 399,517
Pot. See Coffee pot. Watering pot.
Potato digger, I. Vance..... 399,363
Power. See Horse power.
Press. See Baling press. Copying press. Hydraulic press.
Pressing fabrics, machine for, T. C. Fawcett..... 399,511
Printer's quoin, M. W. Berryman..... 399,368
Printing presses, feed gauge for, L. Conant..... 399,384
Printing presses. gripper mechanism for platen, W. H. Price, Jr..... 399,282
Propelling and steering vessels, apparatus for, T. B. Heathorn..... 399,530
Protector. See Electric circuit protector.
Pruning implement, A. Bohn..... 399,370
Pulley, belt, J. A. J. Shultz..... 399,636
Rail bending tool, W. H. Phillips..... 399,630
Rail chairs on timber sleepers, fixing, A. Bolzano. 399,483
Railway, electric, J. B. Blair..... 399,236
Railway gate, J. W. Nebergall..... 399,624
Railway, pneumatic, G. L. Du Laney..... 399,319
Railway signal, electric, T. A. B. Putnam..... 399,556
Railway signaling device, F. P. Benjamin..... 399,474
Railway stringers, fastening for, D. Atwood..... 399,232
Railway switch and alarm, electric, Hull & Anderson..... 399,331
Railway switch signal. H. M. Norton..... 399,342
Railway system, electric. C. S. Bradley..... 399,372
Railway tie, A. K. Hoffmeier..... 399,330
Railway track cleaner, street, J. A. Lewis..... 399,421
Railways, conductor for electric, R. M. Hunter... 399,409
Range boiler, T. W. Rees..... 399,558
Reamer, cast chilled, J. A. Sherman..... 399,349
Reaming machine. H. H. Taylor..... 399,352
Receipts, cover for shipping, D. K. Howe..... 399,407
Refrigerator, J. H. Windisch..... 399,307
Register. See Hotel register.
Regulator. See Electrical machinery regulator.
Roaster. See Meat roaster.
Rocking chair, O. S. Turner..... 399,584
Roll and pinion. R. C. Totten..... 399,295
Roller. See Curtain roller.
Sash, machine for making metal, W. F. Mills..... 399,545
Saw hammering machine. R. Whitehill..... 399,366
Saws, machine for fitting the ends of band, J. M. Petersen..... 399,344
Saw set, A. L. & E. Buell..... 399,490
Saw setting device, A. Effinger *et al*..... 399,391
Scale and measure, grain, E. J. M. Becker..... 399,473
Scale pan, Burrill & Russell..... 399,315
Scale, weighing, W. H. Stewart..... 399,446
Screw cutting die, J. E. Woodbridge..... 399,367
Screw tapping machine, H. H. Taylor..... 399,353
Seal lock, M. C. Harney..... 399,526
Secondary battery, J. L. Huber..... 399,535
Seed drill, M. F. White..... 399,460
Semaphore signal, Stitzel & Weinedel..... 399,579
Separator. See Magnetic separator.
Separator, Bradshaw & Meek..... 399,486
Sewing. G. A. & J. G. Xander..... 399,316
Sewing machine, C. W. Weiss..... 399,364
Sewing machine buttonhole cutting attachment, R. Spahn..... 399,638
Sewing machine buttonhole attachment, H. J. Williams..... 399,304
Sewing machines, waxing device for wax thread, E. A. Stiggins..... 399,578
Shaft attachment for vehicles, D. D. Hare..... 399,525
Sheet metal, cold rolling, P. Richards..... 399,562
Shirt or vest and suspenders, combined, J. T. Brodnax..... 399,238
Shoe clasp, M. N. Bray..... 399,237
Shovel. See Snow shovel.
Showcase supporter and card holder, G. C. Frye.. 399,256
Sifter, ash, G. W. Bown..... 399,371
Signal. See Railway signal. Railway switch signal. Semaphore signal. Switch signal.
Signaling apparatus, transmitting instrument for electric. W. J. Dudley..... 399,505
Sink cleaner, W. V. Esmond..... 399,321
Skate, J. A. Whelpley..... 399,365
Slate, artificial, C. Brown..... 399,374
Sled brake, C. E. Holley..... 399,405
Sleigh, L. Kelley..... 399,335
Sleigh knee. E. J. Youngs..... 399,642
Snow shovel and scraper, L. Fairweather..... 399,394
Soldering iron, hand, E. J. Dolan..... 399,387
Soldering machine, E. J. Dolan..... 399,386
Sole edge burnishing tool, W. Gordon..... 399,609
Spike machine, J. F. Collins..... 399,500
Square and bevel. try, C. F. Merrifield..... 399,424
Stanchion. cattle, D. Lane..... 399,620
Stand. See Wash stand. Window stand. Work stand.
Steam boiler, E. Reynolds..... 399,560
Steam boiler, sectional, C. L. Seabury..... 399,571
Steam engine, W. O. & J. D. Worth..... 399,593
Steam generator, A. L. Gilstrap..... 399,259
Steam generator and radiator, combined, portable, R. G. Ferguson..... 399,512
Steel bars, apparatus for toughening, J. Coffin.... 399,381
Steel, manufacture of, A. T. Hay..... 399,612
Steel, manufacturing, A. T. Hay..... 399,528
Stenographic machine, C. A. Damon..... 399,247
Stopper. See Bottle stopper.
Stove hood, H. Neef..... 399,430
Straw stacker, R. S. Arbogast..... 399,312
Straw stacker, W. W. Dingee..... 399,504
Superheater and burner, J. Livingstone..... 399,541
Supporter. See Showcase supporter.
Surgical drainage tube, J. E. Lee..... 399,540
Suspenders, B. O. Foster..... 399,514
Switch. See Electric switch. Electric motor switch. Railway switch.
Switch board, J. W. Kelly..... 399,269
Switch signal. F. N. Kelsey..... 399,538
Tag holder and tag, M. L. Fogel..... 399,395
Tally sheet, F. W. Barrett..... 399,235
Target, Dufner & Freiner..... 399,604
Telegraph system. W. Burnley..... 399,314
Telephone line cable, G. F. Shaver..... 399,635
Tennis rackets, rubber sleeve for, R. W. Morgan.. 399,340
Tent. A. B. Wood..... 399,640
Testing and recording machine, T. Olsen..... 399,549
Theatrical stage, J. Douglass..... 399,318
Thill couplings. anti-rattler for, F. P. Stiles..... 399,447
Thill, vehicle, G. H. Hutton..... 399,537
Tie. See Railway tie.
Tire and felly. wheel, A. W. Thomas..... 399,360, 399,361
Tire, vehicle wheel A. W. Thomas..... 399,354
Tire, wheel, A. W. Thomas..... 399,355 to 399,358
Toe weight. F. W. Floyd..... 399,253
Tool, combined, G. H. Tucker..... 399,297
Tool handle, J. H. Wundes..... 399,641
Torpedo and gunboat, combined, R. J. Gatling..... 399,516
Trace carrier, A. E. Clark..... 399,498
Traction mechanism, H. L. Van Zile..... 399,299
Trap. See Drainage trap.
Trough. See Feed trough. Watering trough.
Truck, C. G. Deming..... 399,248
Truck, canning house, M. J. Leahy..... 399,621
Truck, car. W. S. G. Baker..... 399,466, 399,468
Truck. car. S. P. Stoddard..... 399,580
Trunk, H. W. Roundtree..... 399,439
Trunk trimming, H. E. Gilson..... 399,323
Truss, A. Owen..... 399,433
Tube. See Surgical drainage tube.
Tube scraper and cleaner, J. Poulesson..... 399,346
Tubing, E. C. Converse..... 399,244
Tubing, manufacture of, E. C. Converse..... 399,245
Tug, hame, J. E. Weiglein..... 399,458
Tuyere, J. M. Hartman..... 399,263
Twine holder, I. Davis..... 399,601
Umbrellas, walking canes, etc., handle for, W. Taylor..... 399,449
Valve, E. Ware..... 399,302
Valve, flush tank. P. V. Dwyer..... 399,506
Valve gear, E. Garst..... 399,397
Valve gear, steam engine, J. J. Heindl..... 399,531
Valve, pressure regulating, J. Nageldinger..... 399,548
Vault light and ventilator, T. W. Langill..... 399,419
Vehicle brake. C. T. Quick..... 399,557
Vehicle, two-wheeled, L. Schierstedt..... 399,288
Vehicle wheel, A. W. Thomas..... 399,362
Vehicle wheel. G. T. Warwick..... 399,453
Vehicles, traction mechanism for self-propelling, H. L. Van Zile..... 399,298
Velocipedes, ball bearing for, G. T. Warwick..... 399,456
Ventilating mechanism, R. A. Rew..... 399,437
Veterinary medical apparatus, C. H. Barr..... 399,234
Vibrating engine, D. D. Hardy..... 399,327
Wagon, E. C. Davis..... 399,502
Wagon brake, A. C. T. Bautain..... 399,471
Wall for houses, W. R. Ray..... 399,284
Wash boiler. M. K. Ocobock..... 399,432
Wash stand, E. W. Woodruff..... 399,461
Washer. See Bottle washer. Dish washer.
Washing fluid, S. L. Paramore..... 399,626
Washing machine, W. H. Goss..... 399,610
Washing machine, G. A. Miller..... 399,425
Watch case, C. K. Giles..... 399,606
Water or other liquids, purifier for, T. H. McCulloch..... 399,429
Watering pot. W. Dischо..... 399,602
Watering trough, G. W. Langdon..... 399,418
Weighing apparel hanger, W. Eyges..... 399,510
Weather. strip, J. E. Jones..... 399,413, 399,414
Weed cutter, self-cleaning, F. E. Lux..... 399,337
Weighing traveling loads, machine for, A. E. Brown..... 399,487, 399,488
Well drilling machine. W. C. Wells..... 399,459
Wheel. See Vehicle wheel.
Wheel, E. M. Benster..... 399,475
Wheels, rim and tire for, A. W. Thomas..... 399,359
Whiskbroom. C. Skeels..... 399,575
Whiskbroom, J. Wright..... 399,308
Wick, lamp. A. Mueller..... 399,277
Window stand, K. Bukawietis..... 399,491
Wire, continuously annealing and plating, J. Coffin..... 399,382
Wire coupling, W. Bainbridge..... 399,465
Wire mat and scraper, woven, R. R. Pease..... 399,554
Wood choppers, foot board for, A. L. Stevens..... 399,444
Work stand, D. H. Murphy..... 399,546
Wreath, artificial, A. & H. Kumpf..... 399,270

DESIGNS.

Advertising frame, W. H. Hardin..... 18,955
Bed pan. I. H. Ovington..... 18,958
Card, receiving, D. L. Clinton..... 18,951
Feather, artificial, H. H. Plaut..... 18,962
Foot warmer or support, J. B. Doyle..... 18,961
Glassware, ornamentation of, F. S. Shirley..... 18,959
Hinge. Hart & Corscaden..... 18,956
Picture support, S. A. Curtis..... 18,960
Trimming, Edelmann & Kursheedt..... 18,952, 18,953
Trimming, dress, J. Maidhof..... 18,957
Wire, screen, A. J. Griffin..... 18,954

TRADE MARKS.

Beer, P. Best Brewing Company..... 16,381
Books, blank account, S. W. Goldberg..... 16,365
Cigars, C. G. Sauerhammer..... 16,384
Confectionery, P. Wunderle..... 16,385
Cotton linings, Burton Bros. & Co..... 16,376
Eggs, fresh and pickled, Mackenzie, Chase & Co... 16,383
Firebrick, stove linings, and articles made wholly or partly of fire clay, F. A. Ostrander..... 16,380
Gas burner tips, Draper Manufacturing Company.. 16,382
Hose of rubber, cotton, or linen, Revere Rubber Company..... 16,370 to 16,372
Medicine for external use, F. G. Mass..... 16,379
Metal polishing paste, W. J. Ramsay..... 16,369
Newspaper or weekly pamphlet, Manufacturers' Record Company..... 16,378
Oil. kerosene, W. Briscoe & Son..... 16,375
Oil, wood preserving, A. Wingenroth..... 16,373
Ointment, H. C. Cady..... 16,363
Pencils, carpenters', American Lead Pencil Company..... 16,358 to 16,361
Remedies for female complaints, C. O. Prosser.... 16,368
Sirup for the cure of asthma, M. A. Cunningham.. 16,377
Sizing for fabrics, Gloy Manufacturing Co..... 16,364
Sprout hooks and other fish hooks, S. Allcock & Co..... 16,457
Steam exhaust heads, W. C. Lyman..... 16,366
Tobacco, chewing and smoking, Arnold, Carlton & McCord..... 16,362
Toilet waters and lotions, Zobel & Failmezger..... 16,374
Whalebone, prepared, F. E. Merriman..... 16,367

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